
Appendix L

Biological Assessment Summary

APPENDIX L

BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

The purpose of the biological assessment is to review the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA) to determine the extent that its implementation may affect proposed, threatened, and endangered species and proposed or designated critical habitat under the Endangered Species Act in the planning area. Because the LUPA is a planning document, the biological assessment focuses on the effects of management actions that will be implemented as a part of this planning.

Section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act requires federal agencies to complete a biological assessment to determine the effects of implementing the LUPA on listed species, based on compliance with NEPA Section 102. Federal agencies are required to consider, avoid, or prevent adverse impacts on fish and wildlife species. Federal agencies are also required to ensure that actions they authorize, fund, or carry out are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat. The Endangered Species Act requires action agencies, such as the US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (Forest Service), to not only consult or confer with the US Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) when there is discretionary federal involvement or control over the action, but also to ensure that resources are afforded adequate consideration and protection. Formal consultation becomes necessary when the action agency requests consultation after determining that the proposed action is likely to adversely affect listed species or critical habitat, or when the aforementioned federal agencies do not concur with the action agency's finding (USFWS 1998).

The programmatic biological assessment developed for the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse LUPA provides documentation and analysis of the proposed action to meet the federal requirements and agreements set forth among the federal agencies. It addresses proposed and federally listed species

and proposed or designated critical habitat. It was prepared under Endangered Species Act Section 7 regulations, in accordance with the 1998 procedures set forth by USFWS and the National Marine Fisheries Service. The BLM and Forest Service, in coordination with USFWS, analyzed the effects of the proposed LUPA on listed species.

In general, the conservation measures applied on behalf of GRSG will also provide conservation value to other species including federally listed plants and animals. In instances where there may be some possible conflicts with federally protected species, conservation measures specific to individual species are incorporated into the LUPA and/or biological assessment as part of the federal action to avoid or greatly reduce any discernable effects. Within this context of conservation benefits, avoidance measures and effect-reduction efforts, the BLM and Forest Service have made the following effects determinations for the federally listed and proposed species and critical habitat analyzed in the biological assessment:

Table L.1
Effects Determinations for Federally Listed and Proposed Species and Critical Habitat in the Northwest Colorado LUPA Planning Area

Species Name	Federal Status	Effects Determination
Black-footed ferret <i>Mustela nigripes</i>	Endangered Experimental Population	Not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the species
Canada lynx <i>Lynx canadensis</i>	Threatened	May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect
Canada lynx critical habitat	Proposed	No Effect
North American wolverine <i>Gulo gulo luscus</i>	Proposed Threatened	No Effect
Least tern <i>Sterna antillarum</i>	Endangered	No Effect
Mexican spotted owl <i>Strix occidentalis lucida</i>	Threatened	No Effect
Mexican spotted owl critical habitat	Designated	No Effect
Piping plover <i>Charadrius melodus</i>	Threatened	No Effect
Piping plover critical habitat	Designated	No Effect
Whooping crane <i>Grus Americana</i>	Endangered Experimental Population	No Effect
Whooping crane critical habitat	Designated	No Effect
Western yellow-billed cuckoo <i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	Proposed Threatened	Not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the species
Western yellow-billed cuckoo critical habitat	Proposed	Not likely to result in the destruction or adverse modification of
Bonytail chub <i>Gila elegans</i>	Endangered	No Effect

Table L.1
Effects Determinations for Federally Listed and Proposed Species and Critical Habitat in
the Northwest Colorado LUPA Planning Area

Species Name	Federal Status	Effects Determination
Bonytail chub critical habitat	Designated	No Effect
Humpback chub <i>Gila cypha</i>	Endangered	No Effect
Humpback chub critical habitat	Designated	No Effect
Colorado pikeminnow <i>Ptychocheilus lucius</i>	Endangered	No Effect
Colorado pikeminnow critical habitat	Designated	No Effect
Greenback cutthroat trout <i>Onchorhynchus clarki</i> ssp. <i>Stomias</i>	Threatened	No Effect
Pallid sturgeon <i>Scaphirynchus albus</i>	Threatened	No Effect
Razorback sucker <i>Xyrauchen texanus</i>	Endangered	No Effect
Razorback sucker critical habitat	Designated	No Effect
Colorado hookless cactus <i>Sclerocactus glaucus</i>	Threatened	May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect
DeBeque phacelia <i>Phacelia submutica</i>	Threatened	May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect
DeBeque phacelia critical habitat	Designated	May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect
Dudley Bluffs bladderpod <i>Lesquerella congesta</i>	Threatened	May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect
Dudley Bluffs twinpod <i>Physaria obcordata</i>	Threatened	May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect
North Park phacelia <i>Phacelia formosula</i>	Endangered	May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect
Osterhout milkvetch <i>Astragalus osterhoutii</i>	Endangered	May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect
Parachute beardtongue <i>Penstemon debilis</i>	Threatened	May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect
Parachute beardtongue critical habitat	Designated	May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect
Penland beardtongue <i>Penstemon penlandii</i>	Endangered	May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect
Ute ladies'-tresses <i>Spiranthes diluvialis</i>	Threatened	May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect
Western prairie fringed orchid <i>Platanthera praeclara</i>	Threatened	No Effect

To access the complete biological assessment, see the project website: <https://www.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite.do?methodName=dispatchToPatternPage¤tPageId=48134>.

REFERENCES

USFWS (US Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service) 1998. Endangered Species Act Consultation Handbook: Procedures for Conducting Consultation and Conference Activities Under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. March 1998.